

Remarks

Favorable reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claim 5 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and claim 1 is amended. Claims 1-3 and 6-20 remain actively pending in the case. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration of the claim is respectfully requested.

In paragraph 2 on page 2 of the final Office Action, claims 1-3, 6-8, 10, 14 and 18-19 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Gleixner (U.S. Pat. 5,446,336). In paragraph 3 on page 5 of the final Office Action, dependent claims 12, 13, 15 and 16 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Gleixner in view of Scholz (U.S. Pat. 5,043,623). In paragraph 4 on page 6 of the final Office Action, dependent claim 17 was rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Gleixner in view of Geven (U.S. Pat. 5,424,609). However, in paragraph 5 on page 6 of the final Office Action, claims 5, 9, 11 and 20 were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

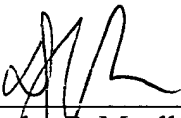
Applicants traverse these rejections, but in the interest of expediting prosecution have amended claim 1 to overcome the rejections by incorporating the limitations of objected to claim 5 into claim 1. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is patentable over the cited references.

Because claims 2-3 and 6-20 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1, claims 2-3 and 6-20 are also patentably distinct over the cited references. Nevertheless, Applicants are not conceding the correctness of the Examiner's rejection with respect to such dependent claims and reserves the right to make additional arguments if necessary.

Respectfully submitted,

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